



OFFICE OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE  
CUMBERLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
142 FEDERAL STREET - P.O. BOX 368  
PORTLAND, ME 04112-0368

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HON. LEIGH I. SAUFLEY  
CHIEF JUSTICE  
TELEPHONE: (207) 822-4286  
FAX: (207) 822-4202

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## PRESS RELEASE

—For Immediate Release—

Judge Ronald Daigle, of the Maine District Court, has been named the Judicial Branch Employee of the Year. Judge Daigle regularly sits in the District Courts in Northern Aroostook County: Fort Kent, Madawaska, and Caribou. In receiving the award Judge Daigle was recognized for his work, in collaboration with his colleagues, in implementing the court system's new model for scheduling in Aroostook County. Judge Daigle is one of two Regional Judges in the northernmost part of the State, and he was honored for his leadership in bringing about change to improve the processing of court cases.

Judge Daigle has been on the District Court bench for more than 22 years. During that time he has effectively managed the court caseload in his region of the State. In accepting the award from Chief Justice Leigh Saufley, the Judge admitted to a degree of skepticism when the Judicial Branch put in place a new scheduling model that involves both the District Court and Superior Court working together to address case processing in each region. Having seen the results of these efforts, Judge Daigle is now a champion of the new system and an innovator in court scheduling.

Judge Daigle is Maine's longest sitting active District Court Judge having been appointed on February 15, 1984. During the past year he was actively involved in the implementation of video hearings for prisoners who, otherwise, would have been transported from the jail in Houlton to the courts in the northern part of the county. The implementation of video conferencing has increased safety and reduced the amount of time the prisoners are being transported by the sheriff. This has proven to be a successful implementation and Judge Daigle was a key member of the planning team for this effort.

The award was presented at a meeting of all of the State Judges in Augusta. Judge Daigle is the first judge to receive this award. In making the presentation Chief Justice Saufley noted that, "Judge Daigle has been described as being fair, courteous, respectful, and having a wide and deep knowledge of the law. He is respected and liked by the bar, the public, and fellow employees."

The Outstanding Judicial Employee of the Year is presented to that person who, during the course of proceeding year, has best exemplified the qualities of competence in providing court services, commitment to public service, respect, courtesy to fellow employees and members of the public, and a willingness to learn and grow. Chief Justice Leigh Saufley indicated that she is especially impressed by Judge Daigle's willingness to try new approaches designed to improve the Court's response to changing public needs.